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Yes, the giant day gecko is the representative of a largely popular insurance company! Though we assure you that the one you keep as a pet will not be saving you any kind of money on your car insurance. The giant day gecko is a treasured gecko among hobbyists nonetheless, and its easy to see why. Their vibrant colors make them attractive in any home terrarium and their funky personalities make them fun to watch during the day.

Lifespan

Giant day geckos can live into their 20s, but typically average between 6-8 years.

Size

As the name implies, giant day geckos are one of the largest gecko members of the day gecko group. You can expect your gecko to reach an adult length of 8-12" with their tail making up nearly half of their length. Females are smaller than males by 1-2".

Natural History

Giant day geckos are widely distributed throughout northern Madagascar. Diurnal by nature, these geckos spend most of their day hunting for insects and hiding among trees and foliage at night. They are a large, well-muscled gecko which is brightly colored, and skin that is exceptionally soft. In addition to that, they lack eyelids and can be observed remoistening their eyes with their tongue often.

Housing

Because of this gecko's arboreal nature, the height of the enclosure is more important than its length. A single day gecko can be housed in a 10 to 20-gallon tank which stands a minimum of 23" tall. A pair of day geckos can be housed in an enclosure measuring 24" x 24" x 12" deep (never house two males together).

Lighting & Heating

To properly thermoregulate, reptiles must be provided with a healthy temperature gradient as is appropriate for each species. For day geckos, this diurnal, tree dwelling lizard thrives in humid, warm conditions.

The ideal ambient temperature of the enclosure should remain between 82-86F and can drop into the 70s at night, which is generally room temperature for most households. Basking temperatures should fall around 95F. While hardy, overheating is their downfall, and your gecko may die if exposed to warmer temperatures. In other words, for most of the year you may find that you will not need to supply supplemental heating (except for generating a basking spot), and you especially do not want to place your enclosure in direct sunlight.

If your household tends to be cooler, especially during seasonal fluctuations, the use of low wattage heating pads adhered to the glass and/or nocturnal heat bulbs suspended over the cage are the best way to provide heat. The ideal humidity range for this species is between 50-70%. Measure temperatures and humidity closely with digital thermometers and hygrometers.

These lizards need ultraviolet light. UVB is essential in the absorption and metabolism of calcium and D3. Additionally, exposure to appropriate wavelengths of UV can provide a day/night cycle for your lizard and display your pet in its best colors. Providing a low output UVB is a necessity and not just a recommendation.

Substrates & Cage Décor

Day geckos are arboreal, tree dwelling lizards and as such require plenty of branches and plants to climb on and hide behind. Sterilized woods, cork bark flats/rounds/tubes, artificial vines, and commercially available reptile décor work well for providing your gecko with climbing and hiding opportunities. Most artificial plants as well as live plants provide visual barriers and may boost humidity levels in the enclosure.

A wide range of substrates are available for day geckos. For a more natural look, your gecko will thrive in a substrate that best mimics its natural habitat. Cypress mulch, orchid bark chips, coco bedding or a mixture can be used. Moistened paper towels may be used for baby geckos.



Keep a shallow water dish at the bottom of the enclosure and mist the enclosure twice a day. Proper humidity is important for keeping your gecko hydrated and will help your gecko shed properly. Low humidity can lead to health problems, such as retained shed or chronic dehydration.

Diet & Nutrition

Day geckos consume both insects and nectar. Your gecko should be offered gutloaded, dusted insects regularly, which include appropriately sized crickets, dubia roaches, mealworms, or black soldier larvae. Superworms, hornworms, and waxworms may be offered as a treat. Never take insects from the wild, as they may contain pesticides or parasites that can harm your gecko.

Fortunately, plenty of commercially prepared diets specifically formulated for day geckos are available and provide your gecko with everything that it needs, and in some cases removes the need to feed insects at all. Brands like Repashy and Pangea make powders that need only be mixed with water and placed in an accessible dish in your gecko's enclosure.

Dusting your insects with a high quality calcium powder and multivitamin is one way to provide your gecko with all of the vitamins and nutrients they need. However, if you are feeding a commercially prepared formula as described previously, the use for additional supplementation is not needed.

Handling & Temperament

This is a species best admired, but can tolerate brief handling. Just remember that as a gecko species, young or very scared geckos may slough off their skin or drop their tails as a defense mechanism. Simply take care not to startle your gecko or grab its tail. If you are concerned about whether your gecko enjoys handling or not, assume that it does not, and allow it to be a beautiful animal to display in your home.